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ABSTRACT

Listed in this publication are various resources relevant to the study of single-parent families. Provided are names and addresses of organizations that provide services specifically to single parents, divorced couples, and children of single-parent families; listings of professional and general publications; selected nonfiction bibliographies suitable for adults, children, and adolescents; and reading materials for parents in the area of separation and divorce. Also summarized are findings of studies dealing with the magnitude of single-parent situations and the effects of single parenting on children. (MP)

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(READING LISTS ON SEPARATION, DIVORCE AND SINGLE PARENTING)

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SINGLE PARENT RESOURCE LIST

SINGLE PARENTING

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY AND MARRIAGE COUNSELORS, INC. 923 West 9th Street, Upland, CA.91786. Referrals for counseling in most areas.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS, 1909 K Street, Washington, DC 20049. Service for widowed and other benefits for members.

BEGINNING EXPERIENCE, 3100 West 41st Street, Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57105. Group experience for widowed, separated, divorced adults. Programs in 22 locations.

CHILD FIND, INC. PO Box 277, New Paltz, New York 12561. 914-255-1848. National organization designed to locate missing children.

DISPLACED HOMEMAKER NETWORK, 1531 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20003. National resource center.

FATHERHOOD PROJECT, Bank Street College of Education. 610 West 112 Street, New York, New York 10025. Refers fathers (single) to programs and other resources nationwide. Development of new options for male involvement in childrearing.

FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, 44 East 23rd Street, New York, New York 10027. Programs nationally to help families assist themselves.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH, 1800 North Kent Street, Arlington, VA. 22209. May be useful for locating local resources.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027. Referrals for help for families.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS, 1219 University Avenue, SE, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414. Counseling, referrals and information.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857. Resources on family and mental health topics.

NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ALDERIAN PSYCHOLOGY, 159 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601. Parent Education centers around the country. Excellent educational materials.

PARENTING EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING, INC. 531 Stevens Boulevard, Solana Beach, California 92075. Conducts parenting skills groups in most areas of the country.

PARENTS ANONYMOUS, 22330 Hawthorne Boulevard, Suite 208, Torrance, CA. 90505. 1-800-421-0353. Director Leonard Lieber. Largest national organization devoted to the prevention of child abuse.

PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS, INC., 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814. 208,000 members. Largest organization devoted to single parents and their children. Over 1000 chapters in all 50 states. Educational, family, recreational and youth programs. Resource materials.

SINGLE PARENT RESOURCE CENTER, 3896 24th Street, San Francisco, California 94114. Peer counseling, support groups, referrals.

SINGLE PARENT SUPPORT CENTER, 16 West 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010. Parent stress clinic, library and information center, father's rights groups, newsletter.

SISTERHOOD OF BLACK SINGLE MOTHERS. 1360 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, New York 11216. Contact Daphne Busby. Self-help concepts for single black mothers.

SOLO CENTER, 6514 35th Street, NE, Seattle, Washington. Marge Luedens, Director. Evening rap sessions, support groups, workshops for single-again men. Good model program.

TOUGH LOVE, PO Box 70, Sellersville, PA.18960. Community Service Foundation. Self-help programs for parents and communities troubled by teenage behavior.

DIVORCE

CENTER FOR FAMILY IN TRANSITION, Dorothy Huntington, 5725 Paradise Drive, Building A, Suite 100, Corte Madera, California 94925.

CREATIVE DIVORCE NATIONAL COUNSELING CENTER, 818 Fifth Avenue, San Rapheal, California 94901. Groups for adults, children, research, training center for divorce counseling.

DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT INSTITUTE, Dr. Joseph Federico, 1400 Brummel, Evanston, Illinois 60201. Seminars and group counseling programs.

DIVORCE AND MARITAL STRESS CLINIC, 1925 North Lynn Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209. Walk-in counseling, seminars, support groups, meditation. Good model for divorce counseling.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE COUNSELING CENTER, 116 East 27th Street, New York, New York 10016. Workshops and counseling for parents and children.

DIVORCE RESOURCE AND MEDIATION CENTER, Jerry Weinstein, Director. 2464 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02140. Non-profit organization, comprehensive services for adults, including legal information.

MILITARY EX-WIVES ASSOCIATION. Expose. Dr. Nancy Abell. P.O. 3269 Falls Church Va. 22043. Group working for rights to protect military ex-wives.

MOTHERS WITHOUT CUSTODY INC., Box 76, Sudbury, Md. 01776. Contact Ellen Kimball. Provides legal and mutual support; information referral service availible.

NATIONAL INSTITUE FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN DIVORCE COUNSELING, 1295 Lenox Circle, NE Atlanta, Georgia 30306. Information on divorce adjustment groups in different areas run by graduates of the Institute.

NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF DIVORCED AND SEPARATED CATHOLICS, 1100 South Goodman Street, Rochester, New York 14620. Local groups around the country.Quarterly magazine Jacob's Well, $10 yearly.

CHILDREN

BIG BROTHERS AND BIG SISTERS OF AMERICA, 117 South 17th Street, Suite 1200, Philadelphia, PA.19103. Local agencies work with children from single parent homes.

EVERGREEN DEVELOPMENT CENTER, Dr. Kenneth Magid, Director, P.O. Box 14, Evergreen, Colorado 80439. Group sessions for children and parents, emphasis on adjustment of children following divorce, materials.

"KIDS IN THE MIDDLE" Group sessions with children and divorcing parents. Contact Kim Long, 8029 Forsyth Boulevard, Clayton, MO. 63105

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CITIZENS IN EDUCATION, 410 Wilde Lake Village Green, Columbia, Maryland 21044. Concerned with educational facilities and programs for single parents and their children.

WIDOWED

THEOS (They Help Each Other Spiritually), 11609 Frankstown Road, Pittsburgh, PA,15235. Group cooperates with others (Big Brothers, Family Services) for widowed persons.

WIDOW TO WIDOW PROGRAM, Information: Dr. Phyllis Silverman, 58 Fenwood Road, Boston, MA 02115. Self-help concepts in outreach programs to widows in several states.

RESOURCES (LOCAL)

ANN LANDERS has listings of supportive groups and agencies in more than 800 cities where her column appears. Contact through newspaper.

SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES, PTAS, ADULT EDUCATION, CATHOLIC CHARITIES may conduct seminars for single parents, divorce, parenting, women returning to work.

PRIVATE FIRMS specializing in family issues, divorce mediation, financial counseling and the like.

YMCA and YWCA'S often have programs for single parents. Contact local Y.

FAMILY COURTS often have social services and referral centers on the community level, contact the local Chamber of Commerce.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN contact local chapter for information and services.

UNIVERSITIES AND LOCAL COLLEGES often offer workshops and counseling sessions. Contact Office of the Resistrar.

RESOURCES (GENERAL)

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ADLERIAN PSYCHOLOGY, 159 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60601. Parent education centers around the country.

CATALYST, 14 East 60th Street, New York, New York 10022. Non-profit organization working directly with women, local groups. The center for information on women and employment.

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES, INC., 31st National Plaza, Suite 1616, Chicago, Illinois 60602. Individual, marital, and family therapy; financial counseling; divorce mediation; seminars/workshops on a variety of topics relating to contemporary families.

FAMILY RELATIONS LEARNING CENTER, 450 Old Drive, Boulder, Colorado 80303. Contact Bruce Fisher. Classes, publications on adjusting to relationship termination.

HANNAH HARRISON CAREER SCHOOL, 4470 MacArthur Boulevard, Washington, D.C. 20007. Contact Betty Bradermann. School for women to strengthen skills and re-enter job market.

INFORMATION CENTER, PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS, INC. Annotated bibliographies for adults and children on separation/divorce, widowed, remarriage/step-parenting; audiovisual guide, "Single Parent Survival Packet" (bibliographies, pamphlets), other educational materials.

LISTENING INCORPORATED, 8716 Pine Avenue, Gary, Indiana 46403. Eduational counseling for single parents and stepfamilies. Newsletter for step-families.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE LAW, P.O. Box 60, Broomall, PA.19008-0060. List of organizations for father's and men's rights. Contact George Doppler.

NURTURING NEWS, 187 Caselli Avenue, San Fransisco, CA.94114. Newsletter for fathers. Subscription $5.00 per year.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES OF NORWOOD, Guild Street Professional Building, 52 Guild Street, Norwood, MA. 02062. Pre-marital counseling, post divorce adjustment counseling.

PRACTICAL PARENTING, 18318 Minnetonka Boulevard, Deephaven, Minnesota 55391. Educational materials, monthly newsletter.

SINGLE DAD'S LIFESTYLE, P.O. Box 4842, Scottsdale, Arizona 85258. Magazine for single, remarried fathers interested in custody or parenting role.

PUBLICATIONS PROFESSIONAL

CONCILIATION COURTS REVIEW, Publication of Conciliation Courts on issues of divorce, custody. Contact Meyer Elkin, Editor, 1217 Shadybrook Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210

DIVORCE RESEARCH SUMMARY. Divorce related research. Contact Center for Family in Transition, 5725 Paradise Drive. Bldg A. Suite 100, Corte Madera, CA 94925.

JOURNAL OF CLINICAL CHILD PSYCHOLOGY, Summer 1977: "Divorce-Its Impact Upon Children and Youth." 1110 Northeast 13th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73117.

JOURNAL OF DIVORCE, Hawthorne Press, 149 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010. Quarterly. Articles published on divorce effects on adults and children.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE TODAY, ATCOM Publishers, 2315 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10024. (212) 873-3760. Weekly newsletter for professionals cites counseling programs, laws, statistics, issues for mental health professionals.

WORKING WITH SINGLE PARENTS; A GUIDE FOR GROUP DEVELOPERS prepared by the Single Parent Family Project, Inc. is designed for those who are working with single parent groups or programs. Price $10. Contact Single Parent Family Project, 16 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010.

PUBLICATIONS GENERAL

HELPING YOUTH AND FAMILIES OF SEPARATION, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE - a program manual. Human Development Services, Publication No.: (OHDS) 80-32010. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 ($7.50). For information about out-of-print annotated bibliography and survey of literature, contact Information Center, Parents Without Partners, Inc.

KNOW, INC., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, PA 15221. Publishes articles and training manuals for support group facilities to explain Women in Transition Model.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PAMPHLETS, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016. Booklets ($.50) on many subjects, including divorce, one-parent families, losing a loved one through death, parenting.

THE NEW WOMEN'S SURVIVAL CATALOG (Karen Grimstad & Susan Rennie, published by Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1973). Comprehensive listing of women's projects

THE SINGLE PARENT, Journal of Parents Without Partners, Inc. $9.00/year. Articles of interest to single parents and those who work with them.

SOLO, newsletter of SOLO resource center. Betty Daggett, Director of Counseling, 1882 NW Broadway, Portland, Oregon 97232. For singles, divorced, single-again, support groups and seminars. Good Model.

STEPFAMILY BULLETIN, Published by the Stepfamily Association of America, bulletin is issued quarterly. Issues of interest to stepfamilies and counselors working with them. 900 Welch Road, Suite 400, Palo Alto, CA. 94304.

SELECTED NON-FICTION BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADULTS

Atlas, Stephen. Single Parenting, A Practical Resource Guide. New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1981. A book to refer to often.

Krantzler, Mel. Creative Divorce. New York: M.Evans & Co., 1974, Pb. Very good discussion of divorce process with emphasis on maximizing personal growth.

Levine, James. Who Will Raise the Children? New York: Lippincott, 1976. Promotes the idea that fathers are as adept at childrearing as mothers.

Ramos, Suzanne. The Complete Book of Child Custody. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979. Sensitive guide to divorce, custody, children, and single parent life. Reading lists.

Roman, Mel & William Haddad. The Disposable Parent-The Case for Joint Custody. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1978. Parenting after the divorce in joint custody arrangements.

Weiss, Robert S. Going It Alone: The Family and the Social Life Situation of the Sinlge Parent. New York: Basic Books. 1979. Excellent discussion, with many verbatim reports. How single parents creatively handle daily life and parenting is reassuring. Many children learn responsibility by sharing household tasks and family decision making.

CHILDREN

Berger, Terry. How Does It Feel When Your Parents Get Divorced? Julian Messner, 1977. Photographs and text deal with a young girl adjusting to her parents' divorce. Sad and angry feelings are gradually resolved and a busy, happy life is resumed.

Bienenfeld, Florence, My Mom and Dad are Getting a Divorce! EMC Corp., 1980. For beginning readers and parents.

Gardner, Richard, The Boys and Girls Book About Divorce. Science House, Inc. 1971. Bantam Books paperback. The classic for children AND adults.

Rofes, Eric. Ed. The Kids' Book of Divorce. Stephen Greene Press, 1980. Written by and for kids. Excellent, comprehensive discussion of common problems and feelings and how they are handled.

Sinberg, Janet. Divorce is a Grown Up Problem. Avon, 1978. Can be read aloud to very young children. Simple black and white drawings, preface for parents.

TEENS

Gilbert, Sara. How to Live with a Single Parent. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1982. Straight talk by and for teens living in a single parent home.

Richards, Arlene and Irene Willis. How To Get It Together When Your Parents are Coming Apart. New York: David McKay, 1976. Gives examples of what young adults may need to cope with during their parents' marital troubles.

AVAILABLE FROM PARENTS WITHOUT PARTNERS, INC.

For location and address of PWP chapter nearest you, call PWP's toll-free membership number: 800-638-8078 during business hours.

SINGLE PARENT MAGAZINE: Journal of PWP, Inc.	$9.00/year
SINGLE PARENT SURVIVAL PACKET: Separation and Divorce pamphlets, reading lists, quotes and tips.	3.00
READING LIST FOR WIDOWED	.25

BOOKS (See Selected Non-fiction Bibliography for description.)

SINGLE PARENTING; A PRACTICAL RESOURCE GUIDE.	$5.00
THE BOYS AND GIRLS BOOK ABOUT DIVORCE	2.50
HOW TO LIVE WITH A SINGLE PARENT	5.00
MOM AND DAD ARE GETTING A DIVORCE	3.50

BROCHURES (all 7 for $1.00) .25 each

SINGLE PARENTING; A PUZZLE AND A CHALLENGE
THE SINGLE PARENT
THERAPY FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS
THE NEVER MARRIED MOTHER
PWP AND THE COMMUNITY
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL (teen groups)
PARENTS ARE FOREVER (Visitation Guidelines in Divorce)

ABOUT PWP, INC

"Children and Youth of Divorce in Parents Without Partners, Inc." (J. Of Clinical Psychology)	.50
"Mutual Help for Single Parents: Parents Without Partners, Inc." (Conciliation Courts Review)	.50
The First Twenty-Five Years. (PWP History, Growth, and Accomplishments.)	.75
PWP Fact Sheet.	.25

FILM: Single Parenting: Crisis and Challenge available for rental. A sensitive portrayal of four families adjusting to single parent life. Excellent for professional seminars and groups of single parents meeting with trained moderators. Write PWP for further information.

TO ORDER MATERIALS:

List the publications, books, or materials you wish to order. Include check or money order for entire amount plus **handling charges**:

$1.00 for orders up to $ 5.00
$2.00 for orders up to $10.00
$3.00 for orders up to $20.00

Minimum order is $2.00 (plus handling). Mail check and request to:

PWP, Inc.
7910 Woodmont Avenue
Suite 1000
Bethesda, MD 20814

SINGLE PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN

The number of children under 18 living with a single parent has doubled since 1960. Nearly 12 million children, or about one out of five, live with a single parent. Ninety percent live with their mother. There are about 15-20 million single parents (with and without custody). Less than 65% of children still live with their original two parents and fewer yet are the former "ideal" family: Dad who works, mom who stays home with the two (ideal) children.

Thirty-two percent of families headed by women live in poverty. In 1978 the average yearly income of a woman with children was under $7,000 compared to almost $19,000 for married couple families with children. Fifty percent of children living with a single mother live in poverty. Nearly half of all black children live with a single mother and of all children born in 1978, it is estimated that nearly half of them will spend some time living with a single parent during their growing years.

Most of the increase in the number of single parent families is due to divorce. While never-married mother families increased 200% between 1970-'8, in actual numbers about 8 million (of the 12 million) children live with a separated or divorced single parent. The divorce rate doubled during the past 10 years. Each year there are over a million divorces and 60% of these involve children. The divorce rate is about 40% for first marriages, 44% for second marriages.

Most single mothers are poor, despite the fact that they work. Eighty-one percent of divorced mothers with children 6-17 work, 67% with children under 6--compared to 57% and 42% of married mothers of children 6-17 and 0-6 years.

The White House Conference of Families brought out in 1980 that "single parent families will probably constitute the most severe and widespread problem of income maintenance and security in the next decade." The severity of economic problems may be the single most important factor influencing the adjustment, integrity, and functioning of single parent families.

Negative attitudes by others are another obstacle single parents face. These can add significantly to the stress of other problems (finances, housing, job training, education, parenting, and social/personal adjustment). Use of the term "broken home", or others ("non-traditional family", "alternative life style") that imply single parent families are inferior to married couple families is not constructive Negative lables do much damage since people tend to live up to the attitudes or expectations of others. To think that one lives in a "broken home" may create feelings of hopelessness, depression, defeat, and self-pity. It would be much more helpful if divorced people are viewed not as "failures" but as strong enough to end a very troubled relationship and to courageously attempt a demanding new style of life.

Another attitude better not taken is pity. This can often affect children especially, when the surrounding adults feel sorry for the "poor things" suffering through their parents divorce. We all know two parent homes that are unhappy and single parent homes that are happy and well-functioning. Adults--teachers, neighbors, relatives--who pity children in single parent homes unwittingly rob children of the capacity to make the best of any situation. A pitied individual often develops self-pity. This may imobilize him, make him dependent on others to satisfy all his needs, or cause him to seek revenge--"The world owes me a living for all I have suffered".

A more positive acceptance of the reality of WHAT IS is much more constructive. There are many things that happen in life that are difficult to handle. But the belief that single parents and their children can handle family changes provides a necessary message of respect and faith that will go a long way to prevent helplessness and promote courage and self-sufficiency.

Some Problems

There is usually acute emotional stress after marriage dissolution. Dr. Robert Weiss says it is caused by "loss of attachment." Others say it is due to the drastic changes that are necessary. Others claim stress is caused by loss of "belongingness." There may be guilt, disappointment, pain, depression, anger, a sense of isolation, and a reduced self-concept. Practical problems include (usually) finding a job, relocating the household, and assuming total responsibility for formerly shared tasks. Married friends fade away and there is a need to develop an entirely new circle of supportive friends. Parents who visit their children feel uncomfortable in the new role. While many popular books extol the creativeness of divorce and divorced individuals tell of personal growth, hardly anyone would like to relive the first year after a marital separation. Even a marriage with constant quarreling provides the two combattants with a kind of personal validation.

For mothers, there are credit and finances and jobs to cope with, finding child care they can afford. There's a home to run and, if working, a constant energy crisis. With such a busy schedule there is little reserve energy and many single mothers yearn for a little time they can call their own. Supporting her children emotionally when her own life if fraught with drastic changes is not easy. This is the reason that reactions to the immediate changes of marital separation are the most difficult and are reflected in the children involved.

Research, experience, and the collective experiences of nearly a million PWP members point to factors other than just living in a single parent family as influencing adjustments and functioning of single parent families. It is likely that (psychological) problems that do not decrease with time are due to sources such as unemployment, poverty and extreme financial stress, poor housing in decaying neighborhoods, long term conflict in the home, the adults lack of competence/training/psychological functioning. Single parent families can and often do fill the psychological needs of those living in them.

Children in Single Parent Families

Historically there has been much handwringing about the plight of the children of divorcing parents. Researcher, Dr. Hetherington, talks about the "innocent children who are victimized." We are alert to the perfect set-up for the development of pity.

But what does research tell us? In the 1950's, research was just beginning to show that divorce might not ruin a child for life. Often good adjustments were overlooked by concentrating on the tensions at the time of separation. A child might, in fact, be relieved by the sudden peace and tranquility in the home after one parent has left. Investigators began to suggest that problems that occurred in some children might be due to what went on before the divorce or the quality of the home life rather than to the presence or absence of one parent. They even suggested that children may fare better in a happy one-parent home than in one with a mother and father in conflict. Couples rarely stay together now

"for the sake of the children," knowing that children will be better off in a happier home. A recent research study linked the self-esteem of school youngsters to the degree of perceived conflict in the home, NOT family structure.

How severely children's lives are disrupted also depends on the developmental age of the child. The entire security of a younger child lies in his family, so he may be hit hard at first by separation. A school age child is busy with growth and mastery of intellectual, academic, social and physical skills. These take much of his thoughts and energy. A teenager is concerned with defining his identity, constructing a set of values and beliefs, and looking toward meeting the responsibilities of adult life.

Another factor affecting how children fare is the perceptions of the child. Some thrive in circumstances that cause others to regress and fail; some succumb to difficult circumstances and others overcome them in creative and constructive ways. One explanation is that each individual views the world in his own unique way and interprets events differently. This means that one should look to the individual child's perceptions, not just to divorce, to learn if real or permanent psychological damage has resulted.

It has been shown that children fare worse if parents draw them into their own battles, create loyalty conflicts, or try to turn them against the other parent. It is a very encouraging trend to see that joint custody or coparenting agreements are replacing many of the degrading battles in the courtroom for custody of children. It is generally accepted that children will fare better if they are allowed free access to the parent that doesn't live in the home.

There are some typical reactions of children during the stages of marital separation. Younger children will be fearful. Being self-centered, they may feel responsible for a marital break. Behavior may regress, they may cling to adults, be moody, irritable, whine, or throw tantrums. Preventing these behaviors by adequately preparing children for changes cannot be overemphasized. There are many excellent books for parents and for children that guide them sensibly in this preparation.

The school age child may be angry. A teacher may be the first to notice changes in school in behavior as an expression of anxiety about changes at home. Older children are subject to loyalty conflicts and will resent being put in the middle of parental warfare. They do have more defenses than their younger siblings and may even deny the entire situation. Fortunately their pursuit of activities in school and involvement with their peer group seem to help them out. Children 10-12 years old seem to recover most quickly, according to California researchers Wallerstein and Kelly.

Teens generally "grow up fast" as a result of parental divorce. They, too, may have loyalty conflicts, anger, depression--and may defind these painful feelings by distancing themselves from their parents' troubles. This is a good defense, and they are often able to feel empathy or have some understanding of their parents as individuals. They can also have some insight into "who owns the problem," and feel less responsible than younger children. Most children may have suspected that things were not going well between the parents, and some may even say, "Why did you stay together so long?"

Some Strengths

Research has also sought to equate father absence with many problems that may

develop in children. The jury is still out on this one, as many other variables are important--such as socioeconomic status, duration and time of onset of father absence, presence or absence of community support systems, and general functioning of the parent. One reviewer found that school achievement depended on economic status, rather than marital status and found, that, as in PWP members, mothers in fatherless homes often are more concerned with the educational achievement of their children than many of their married counterparts.

Parents also gain a sense of mastery through coping with the real demands and changes after marital separation. Since a crisis can spawn both damage AND growth, many take advantage of the growing numbers of community agencies and mutual help groups (such as PWP) and exhibit more of the latter than the former.

Just as adults learn mastery of complicated responsibilities, children also learn coping skills. These are skills that may help them out later in adult life. Weiss brought out in GOING IT ALONE that single parent children take on genuine responsibilities around the house, feel good about contributing to the family, and even help in family decision making. He suggested that single parent homes are usually more democratic than most two parent families.

Single parenting is frequently a very satisfying way of life--a fact that may explain why more single parents are choosing not to remarry than previously. Large numbers of single parents are meeting the challenges of single parenting and are raising their children to responsible adulthood. As the number of single parent families grow, there is ample evidence that handling divorce or death successfully can build unusual strength and maturity in the members of single parent families.

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March, 1981

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CHILDREN IN A SINGLE PARENT HOME
(Quotable Quotes)

- In 1978, over 19.2% of all children living with parent(s) lived in a single-parent home.* The proportion of children under 18 living with a divorced mother doubled and with a never-married mother tripled between 1970 and 1978. Nearly one out of two children born in the mid-1970s will spend some time living in a one-parent family before reaching the age of 18. (1)

- There were 18.3 million persons living in families which included a divorced, separated, remarried or never-married woman. The poverty rate for these persons was 27% compared to 8% for all other persons in families. (1)

- Households with a male householder had a median income of $18,060 in 1978 compared to $7,060 for households with a female. (2)

- The number of divorced, widowed, and separated working women with children under 18 increased 70% from 1969 to 1979. (3)

- Over 10.5 million children under 18 live with a mother-only and nearly a million with a father only. In March, 1979, over half of black children under 18 lived with only one parent compared to 16% of white children. (4)

- A single parent family is likely to be headed by a woman and it is likely to have few financial resources, despite the fact that the mother works.

*Methods of population study do not include the status of parents without custody, but whose children may visit or live part-time with them and constitute another bona fide one-parent family.

- For more than 40 years, "broken homes" and the "breakdown of the family" have been held responsible for many of society's problems - mental illness, the poverty cycle, lack of education, low morals and juvenile delinquency. (5)

- One of their worst handicaps is community suspicion that by definition children in one-parent homes must be problem children. At the same time, the community has a nasty habit of waiting until emotional disturbances or delinquency appear before offering attention and support to children in special circumstances. This is becoming inexcusable. (6)

- Most psychiatrists agree that divorce <u>per se</u> does not necessarily cause psychiatric problems to develop in children. In fact, the child living with unhappily married parents more often gets into psychiatric difficulty than the ones whose mismatched parents have been healthy and strong enough to sever their troubled relationship. (7)

- ...the term, "broken home," is one used by married people (and sometimes singles who have never been married) to describe a family different from their own. (5)

- If parents <u>think</u> they have a family, they have one. If parents think they have a "broken home," they have one. When children believe--because their parents believe--<u>that they have two intact homes where they belong and are</u>

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wanted, they gain the security of continuity, as well as a sense of their parents' commitment to their parental roles. (5)

• On the whole, in our society, the one-parent family has been viewed as a form of un-family or sick family. For a number of reasons it would be wiser to recognize the one-parent family as a form that exists and functions...such families can be cohesive, warm, supportive and favorable to the development of children. (8)

• Many studies have compared children growing up in mother-headed households, most of them the product of divorce, with children growing up in two-parent households. Few of these studies found differences between these groups of children...one study found that adolescents whose parents had earlier separated seemed to have arrived at greater security and happiness than had a comparison group of adolescents who said their parents were still married, but unhappy. (9)

• Children whose mothers seemed to be functioning effectively appeared not unduly anxious...There are some respects in which children who grow up in single-parent homes seem superior to children who grow up in two-parent homes...A number of studies suggest that the greater participation of the children in the management of the single-parent home and their greater closeness to the mother tend to enhance their verbal skill. (9)

• Most husbandless mothers find they can raise their sons and daughters as successfully as other parents. In some cases, it seems as though the added responsibility and considerateness which the children feel...builds unusual maturity and character into them. (10)

• The tensions in divorce certainly tell on the children, but the answers the children find are not inherent in the institution of divorce. The more fruitful question..."How can we arm children to deal with themselves in the fact of the tensions in their families, which may lead their parents to the divorce court?" (11)

• Children from one-parent families appeared to be stressed only (1) where relations between the parents continued to be turbulent following the divorce; or (2) relations with the parent not in the home were forbidden the child. No children from families in which the divorced perents had mutually agreed upon and followed arrangements for finance and child care turned up in the child guidance clinic sample. (12)

• In the last fifty years the welfare of children has become the major justification for avoiding divorce and for preserving the nuclear family...Professional literature on divorce is filled mainly with poorly documented cliches about children...Overemphasis on the amount of hurt and deprivation children feel encourages those children to experience divorce as a morbid crisis and a paralyzing blow...We have found no evidence that divorce is a danger to the welfare of society or a psychological "inhibitor" of normal development. Handled well, it is more likely to be a potentially liberating experience which restructures family life in a healthier way... (13)

• Given the paucity of evidence that marital mobility and single-parent headship harms children, the genuine social and economic hardships faced by female-headed families and the general lack of existing policy other than subsistance-level public assistance to deal with their needs, there is a presumption that the pressing policy need is to make life less difficult for female-headed families. Furthermore some of the policy options in this area--for example, improved day care, social services and child support arrangements--are better defined and more within the range of accepted public policy than are devices to influence private decisions on marriage and family. (14)

• Findings of studies about the existence and strength of an association between "broken homes" (our quotes) and juvenile delinquency give clear support to the porposition that father absence per se is less salient among relevant family factors than are the climate and tone of the home and the kind of supervision given to the child (and the socioeconomic factors)...There is no evidence so far available that offers a firm basis for assuming that boys who grow up in fatherless homes are more likely, as men, to suffer from inadequate masculine identity as a result of lacking a resident male model. (15)

• Behavior regression following parental separation in very young children was temporary in the majority of cases. Most of the number who continued psychological deterioration, also experienced diminuation in the quality of the mother-child relationship. There is no evidence of a relationship between the initial turmoil surrounding the divorce events and the condition of the child a year later, except in those instances when the turmoil continued unabated during the intervening period...It was found many times that the father had developed a richer, more consistent, and seemingly more affectionate relationship with his children than he had obtained prior to the divorce or at the time of separation. (16)

• It appears that following parental divorce many young people live through an acutely painful experience which, although time limited for most, is marked by a rapid acceleration and telescoping of normative adolescent perceptions, conflict, preoccupations and responses. Nevertheless, most of the young people were able, within a year, to take up their individual agendas and proceed toward adulthood at a more measured pace...and were able to continue at a level equivalent to their previous achievement or enhanced even by their mastery of the inner and outer events of the preceding year. (17)

• Psychologists like Dr. William F. Reynolds, of Queens College in New York, have shown that children of divorced parents suffer less from emotional and physical problems than children living in a two-parent home where there is much marital conflict. In addition, because there is one less opinion to be reckoned with, there is more tranquillity and stability in the home. And this is hardly an isolated study. Almost every scientific investigation in recent years has concluded that most youngsters of divorce turn out emotionally sounder than those living in the discord of a bad marriage. (18)

• ...findings showed that most of the children's problems had their origins in the strife- and tension-ridden environments inevitably generated in strife- and tension-ridden marriages...many children...have grown up into adults with a deeper degree of understanding and human sensitivity than those whose childhood was relatively trauma-free. (19)

• ...divorce seldom, if ever, takes the toll that an unhappy marriage or family life would take over months and years of continual conflict or sterile silence. The problems most commonly seen at community mental health centers stem directly or indirectly from unhappy marriages and poor family life. (20)

• No person is as unhappy as one who feels unfairly treated and sorry for himself, and this is exactly the feeling that is picked up by children when the surrounding adults feel sorry for the "poor things." Unwittingly, these adults rob children of the capacity to make the best of any situation, and are demonstrating a lack of faith and respect. This insidious pity is very likely to occur during and after divorce, when parents and relatives feel sorry for the children having to go through such a traumatic situation. In fact, they'll be traumatized only if you expect them to be. (21)

• ...many parents report having...announced to the children that now, with only one parent in the household, ...every member must assume a full share of responsibility. ...once children accept the increased responsibility, it becomes natural for the single parent to consult the children regarding household decisions. ...authority and responsibility are more nearly shared and...the children assume genuine responsibility. The single-parent family is hardly a perfect democracy...it is only more nearly one than the two-parent family. (22)

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Parents Without Partners, Inc.

An international non-profit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to the welfare and interests of single parents and their children

SEPARATION AND DIVORCE READING LIST FOR PARENTS

*Baruth, Leroy C. A SINGLE PARENT'S SURVIVAL GUIDE: HOW TO RAISE THE CHILDREN. Kendall/Hunt, 1979. Sound principles of childrearing, coping with misbehavior, and guiding children in responsible behavior.

Bohannan, Paul. DIVORCE AND AFTER. Doubleday, 1970, Pb. Excellent collection of articles analyzing the divorce process, legal, cultural and emotional. Includes recommendations for change.

Despert, J. Louise. CHILDREN OF DIVORCE. Doubleday, 1962, Pb. Says that children fare better when parents in deep conflict divorce rather than continue marriage. Points out ways of safeguarding children. Somewhat traditional views, but a classic.

*DiGiulio, Robert C. WHEN YOU'RE A SINGLE PARENT. Abbey Press, 1979, Pb. A warm, insightful book with advice on how to make single parenting rewarding and enriching. A bargain for under $2.

*Edwards, Marie & Eleanor Hoover. THE CHALLENGE OF BEING SINGLE. J.P. Tarcher, Inc., 1974, Pb. Practical guide for living a full life as a single person freed from self-limiting expectations of finding completeness from a magical "one and only" partner. (Available from PWP, Inc., $1.50)

Eisler, Riane T. DISSOLUTION: NO-FAULT DIVORCE, MARRIAGE AND THE FUTURE OF WOMEN. McGraw Hill, 1977. Outlines changes in divorce and marriage from point of view of equality between the sexes. Personal divorce checklist and discussion of marriage contracts.

Forman, Lynn. GETTING IT TOGETHER. Berkeley Publ. Co., 1974, Pb. A practical and positive guide for women that focuses on becoming your own person again (or for the first time). Particularly good on the parent-child relationship.

Galper, Miriam. CO-PARENTING, A SOURCE BOOK FOR THE SEPARATED OR DIVORCED FAMILY. Running Press, 1978. Good on equally shared parenting.

*Gardner, Richard. THE BOYS AND GIRLS BOOK ABOUT DIVORCE. Science House, 1970, PB available from PWP, Inc., $1.50. An excellent guide to help children understand and deal with their parents' divorce. Very valuable for parents as well.

Gardner, Richard. THE PARENTS BOOK ABOUT DIVORCE. Doubleday, 1977. Psychoanalytically oriented discussion in depth about possible problems with children. Warnings on using children as weapons and healthy visitation guidelines

Gettleman, Susan & Janet Markowitz. THE COURAGE TO DIVORCE. Simon and Schuster, 1974, Pb. A thorough analysis of anti-divorce forces and the damaging myths about divorce in this society. Suggests reform of marriage as well as of divorce. Emphasis on opportunities for personal growth, but not a guide book.

Hallett, Kathryn. A GUIDE FOR SINGLE PARENTS. Celestial Arts, 1973. Transactional analysis for people in crisis.

Hensley, J. Clark. HELP FOR SINGLE PARENTS. Christian Action Commission, 1973. A very human but more conservative guide to divorce, based in Christian theology.

International Headquarters 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20014 (301) 654-8850

Hirsch, Barbara B. DIVORCE: WHAT A WOMAN NEEDS TO KNOW. Henry Regnery Co., 1974, PB. Discussion of legal aspects of divorce including custody, financial matters, courtroom hearings. Briefly considers the impact of "no-fault" divorce on women, but primarily concerned with divorce under traditional fault laws. Oriented toward middle class.

Hunt, Morton & Bernice Hunt. THE DIVORCE EXPERIENCE. McGraw-Hill, 1977. Comprehensive, readable description of changes in the divorces of middle-class Americans over the past decade by the author of the classic, THE WORLD OF THE FORMERLY MARRIED (1966). Survey questionnaires and interviews point out many positive aspects, including personal growth and expansion.

Kelleher, Stephen J. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE FOR CATHOLICS? Doubleday, 1973, PB. A provocative analysis of the Catholic Church's position on divorce, questions as to its validity, and suggestions for a different approach.

Kessler, Sheila. THE AMERICAN WAY OF DIVORCE: PRESCRIPTIONS FOR CHANGE. Nelson-Hall, 1975. Analyzes individual and societal aspects of divorce, recommends changes in both areas, discusses "dissolution training."

*Krantzler, Mel. CREATIVE DIVORCE. M. Evans & Co., 1974, PB. Very good discussion of the divorce process, with a description of divorce counseling. Emphasis in on maximizing this opportunity for personal growth.

Milne, Ann L., Ed. JOINT CUSTODY, A HANDBOOK FOR JUDGES, LAWYERS AND COUNSELORS. Useful also for interested parents. (Association of Family Conciliation Courts, 10015 Terwilliger Blvd. SW, Portland, OR 79219, $10)

Napolitane, Catherine & Victoria Pellegrino. LIVING AND LOVING AFTER DIVORCE. Rawson Associates, 1977. Popularly written discussions about practical aspects of divorce, sex, dating for women. Author is founder of divorce organization for women.

*Ramos, Suzanne. THE COMPLETE BOOK OF CHILD CUSTODY. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1979. Sensitive guide to divorce, custody, children, and single-parent life.

*Ricci, Isolina. MOM'S HOUSE, DAD'S HOUSE: MAKING SHARED CUSTODY WORK. Macmillan, 1980. The fruits of a decade of work with families which demonstrate the conviction that cooperation in parenting responsibilities can be constructive after divorce. A through discussion of complex legal and financial considerations, an exploration of the "stages" of divorce, and rationale and case histories that show how to build two real homes for children. A valuable resource.

Ripple, Paula. THE PAIN AND THE POSSIBILITY: DIVORCE & SEPARATION AMONG CATHOLICS. Ave Maria Press, 1978. While many theological questions remain unanswered, shows that the Church is reaching out to support divorcing couples in many areas.

*Roman, Mel & William Haddad. THE DISPOSABLE PARENT: THE CASE FOR JOINT CUSTODY. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1978. Parenting after the divorce in joint custody arrangements.

Singleton, Mary Ann. LIFE AFTER MARRIAGE. Stein and Day, 1974. Practical and candid guide for women, emphasizing development of identity and potential. Good in discussing relationships with men.

Smoke, Jim. GROWING THROUGH DIVORCE. Harvest House, 1976. Christian outlook on transition from married to single life and accepting responsibilities for children.

Steinzor, Bernard. WHEN PARENTS DIVORCE. Pantheon, 1969, PB. A guide for parents in helping children through divorce and afterwards. Does not demand the pretense of affection between ex-spouses. Promotes openness in relationships.

Turow, Rita. DADDY DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE. Anchor Press PB, 1978. Inexpensive book with sensible advice for divorcing parents.

Watts, Virginia. THE SINGLE PARENT. Fleming H. Revell Company, 1976. From self-evaluation through self-fulfillment, by Christian counselor.

Weiss, Robert S. MARITAL SEPARATION. Basic Books, 1975. Helpful verbatim reports from separated people with discussion. Most useful for those undergoing separation, especially those who were "left." Gives perspectives on what is normal after loss and disruption of intimate relationships. Many will not agree with his prescription to find a new attachment.

*Weiss, Robert S. GOING IT ALONE: THE FAMILY LIFE AND SOCIAL SITUATION OF THE SINGLE PARENT. Basic Books, 1979. Format similar to MARITAL SEPARATION. Illustrates how individuals have different reactions and strengths. Verifies single parent families as more democratic; many children in single-parent homes learn responsibilities by sharing household tasks and participating in family decision-making. Still emphasis on finding a new relationship, although many single parents are choosing single parenting as a satisfying, permanent life style.

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Women in Transition. WOMEN IN TRANSITION: A FEMINIST HANDBOOK ON SEPARATION AND DIVORCE. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975, PB. Feminist-oriented comprehensive guide written by women who have experienced separation and divorce. All inclusive bibliography and resources lists.

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*Woolley, Persia. THE CUSTODY HANDBOOK. Summit Books, 1979. Comprehensive survey of all custody arrangements, with keen sensitivity to what is best for children. Various resources lists and bibliographies.

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ESPECIALLY FOR FATHERS

*Atkin, Edith & Estelle Rubin. PART-TIME FATHER. Vanguard, 1976. Sensible analysis of fathering, full and part-time, after divorce.

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Shepard, Morris A. & Gerald Goldman. DIVORCED DADS--THEIR KIDS, EX-WIVES AND NEW LIVES. Chilton Book Company, 1979. Another good book for fathers.

SINGLE DADS LIFESTYLE. Newsletter/magazine format of concerned fathers' groups. PO Box 4842, Scottsdale, AZ 85258 ($12/year). Also compiles directory of groups for fathers. Hotline: (602) 998-0980.

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Victor, Ira and Win Ann Winkler. FATHERS AND CUSTODY. Hawthorne, 1977. Discussion and personal experiences in readable form. Resources, bibliography, legal groups.

Also available from Information Center, Parents Without Partners, Inc.
Children's Literature Reading List (Separation and Divorce, Single Parent Family Life)
THE SINGLE PARENT magazine, Journal of Parents Without Partners, Inc. ($7.50/year)
SEPARATION AND DIVORCE - SINGLE PARENT SURVIVAL PACKET ($2). Reading lists and useful pamphlets.
Widowed Reading List.
Contact Parents Without Partners, Inc., for information about these and other educational materials.

*Especially Recommended